

TOWN OF MANSFIELD  
Ethics Board  
Wednesday, July 15, 2015  
Audrey Beck Municipal Building, Conference Room B

**Minutes**

Members Present: John DeWolf, Denise Keane, Saul Nesselroth, Jim Raynor, Win Smith, Nora Stevens (Chair)

Staff Present: Maria Capriola, Assistant Town Manager

The meeting was called to order at 4:30pm.

**I. PUBLIC COMMENT**

Martha Kelly, Mansfield, submitted comments in writing (was not able to attend the meeting). Ms. Kelly disclosed her affiliation with the Mansfield Board of Education and that she was speaking as an individual. She is in opposition to teachers receiving gifts from children and families.

**II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Smith made the motion, seconded by Raynor to adopt the minutes of October 22, 2014 as corrected. The minutes as corrected were adopted unanimously.

**III. CODE APPLICABILITY TO MBOE EMPLOYEES**

Capriola, Raynor and Stevens provided an overview of the correspondence and discussion on the topic between the Personnel Committee and the Mansfield Board of Education. The Ethics Board offered the following:

- The Ethics Board maintains its position that the Code is applicable to Mansfield Board of Education employees. Should the Board receive a complaint about a Mansfield Board of Education employee, the Ethics Board will use the Town's Code, not the MBOE Ethics Policy;
- Gift limits set in the MBOE Ethics Policy are too high and in conflict with the Town's Ethics Code;
- Preference for a no gift policy for teachers; would like to see an amendment to the Code to that affect;
- Concern that a survey of parents on gift giving would not be representative, and therefore not useful;
- Education efforts as to what are considered acceptable gifts under the Town's Code should occur for teachers, staff, parents and children.

By consensus the Board agreed to issue a memo to the Personnel Committee summarizing the Board's discussion on the matter. Stevens will prepare the memo.

**IV. ADVISORY OPINION – 25-7M OF THE CODE**

The Board reviewed and discussed an advisory opinion request from E. Wassmundt. The Board believes that a candidate for public office should be able to endorse

himself/herself in a letter to the editor. Raynor made the motion, seconded by Smith to issue the advisory opinion to Wassmundt as presented. Motion passed unanimously.

By consensus the Board agreed to issue a memo to the Personnel Committee seeking clarification to 25-7M, more specifically political activity for public officials and staff. Keane will draft a memo summarizing the Board's discussion on the matter and submit to Stevens for review.

#### V. HOUSKEEPING ITEMS

Stevens will reach out to Jamie Lang-Rodan and Trisha Baker about serving as an alternate for the Board.

#### VI. FY 14/15 ANNUAL REPORT

Raynor made the motion, seconded by DeWolf to add FY 14/15 Annual Report to the agenda. Motion passed unanimously. By consensus, the Board discussed and approved an annual report to be sent to the Town Council for FY 14/15.

Meeting adjourned at 5:17p.m.

Respectfully Submitted, Maria Capriola, Assistant Town Manager